



Using a Modified Group Environment Questionnaire to Investigate Cohesion Among Sport Officials

Paradis, K., Hancock, D., Martin, L., & Evans, B. (2019). Using a Modified Group Environment Questionnaire to Investigate Cohesion Among Sport Officials. *JOURNAL OF SPORT & EXERCISE PSYCHOLOGY*, 41, S82-S82.

[Link to publication record in Ulster University Research Portal](#)

Published in:
JOURNAL OF SPORT & EXERCISE PSYCHOLOGY

Publication Status:
Published (in print/issue): 01/06/2019

Document Version
Author Accepted version

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Studies on cohesion in sport are limited to athletic teams (e.g., Eys, Bruner, & Martin, 2018); however, recent research indicates that sport officials are also members of a team (Hancock, Martin, Evans, & Paradis, 2018). The purpose of the present study was to examine perceptions of cohesion among sport officials. A secondary purpose was to evaluate the validity of the Group Environment Questionnaire (GEQ; Carron, Widmeyer, & Brawley, 1985) for use with sport officials. Participants included 206 officials (96% male; Mage= 50.48, SD= 12.52; Mexperience= 20.32, SD= 12.17) from 9 sports. Participants completed the GEQ, which had been modified for use with sport officials. A confirmatory factor analysis was performed on the modified GEQ, which yielded acceptable model fit ($\chi^2 = 318.66$, CFI = .94, IFI = .94, TLI = .92, RMSEA = .08), with strong factor loadings across all four dimensions (Individual Attractions to the Group Task: .63–.89; Individual Attractions to the Group Social: .80–.85; Group Integration Task: .74–.92, Group Integration Social: .70–.85). No further model modifications were made. Paired t-tests comparing the relative strength of cohesion perceptions of all four dimensions of cohesion indicated significant differences ($p < .01$), whereby officials rated task dimensions of cohesion (i.e., Individual Attractions to the Group Task and Group Integration Task) higher than social dimensions of cohesion. Further, multiple one-way ANOVAs revealed significant differences ($p < .05$) in perceptions of cohesion based on sport officiated. Individual Attractions to the Group Social was perceived higher for American football than basketball and soccer. Group Integration Social was perceived higher for American football than soccer. No other group differences emerged. Officials appear to emphasize the task aspect of their groups, and differences exists across sport, necessitating continued investigations pertaining to the nature of cohesion in sport officials.